

**Fifth meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development of Latin America and the Caribbean Extraordinary Session “10 years of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development”**

**July 4, 2024**

**Closing session**

**Closing remarks by Susana Sottoli, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNFPA**

**Protocol greetings**

- **Mrs. Constanza Bejaro Ramos**, Director of Economic, Social, and Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia
- **Mr. Javier Medina Vásquez**, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- **Mr. Luis Yáñez**, Secretary of the Commission, ECLAC
- **Mr. Simone Cecchini**, Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE), Population Division of ECLAC
- A special greeting to Ambassador Adriana Mendoza
- Heads of government delegations of Latin America and the Caribbean
- Representatives of civil society organizations
- Colleagues from international organizations and the United Nations System
- Ladies and gentlemen, friends.

Good afternoon

First of all, I want to extend my deep gratitude on behalf of the United Nations Population Fund to the Government of Colombia, to the national delegations present here, to civil society representatives, academia, the private sector, colleagues from the United Nations

and other participants who accompanied us during these two important days. Thank you to our partners on this path, colleagues from ECLAC and CELADE. And of course to all my UNFPA colleagues throughout this region. I will not name them one by one, but my very special recognition goes out to them.

We have reached the end of this Fifth Meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development.

Today we celebrate the approval of a powerful resolution, which not only reaffirms our region's commitment to sexual and reproductive rights, gender equality, and the rights of girls, adolescents, and women in all their diversity but also reiterates the validity of the Montevideo Consensus and the Cairo Programme to advance, and never regress, in the achievements already attained.

In a historic and unprecedented manner, the resolution redresses a long-overdue debt by highlighting the centrality of policies with a gender and intersectional focus to guarantee the full exercise of the rights of people with disabilities. Because, as was said today, we are in the era of rights, not favors or assistencialism. Therefore, we welcome the fact that the resolution adopted today establishes the creation of an open-ended group of friends of the Presidency on the rights of people with disabilities and the population and development agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I want to especially recognize the effort of articulation and dialogue of civil society organizations that, with maturity, breadth of vision, and unwavering commitment, have presented a declaration that, representing the diversity of civil society, challenges us and commits us to continue advancing in these agendas.

For this reason, UNFPA regionally, sub regionally, and at the country office level, will continue to facilitate spaces for dialogue and coordination with civil society organizations in all their diversity, as required by the Cairo Programme of Action and the Montevideo Consensus.

We will also continue to work side by side with governments to accompany them in fulfilling the commitments assumed within the framework of this conference and this resolution. Most especially, we will continue working to strengthen their sociodemographic and vital statistics systems, as well as their national statistical offices, to produce quality data disaggregated by all relevant characteristics, which reflect the diversity of the population, and allow for the identification of inequalities and their consequences, to thereby guide the development of public policies that promote progress for all people without exclusion.

Dear delegates,

It is in the interest of all nations to pursue people-centered development, as it creates the conditions for achieving healthy, prosperous, and democratic societies. In a context marked by complex crises and growing polarization, uniting the world in the pursuit of this practice has never been a more urgent priority.

At the conclusion of this regional conference, I would like to invite you to continue this dialogue to sustain progress, find solutions collectively, and promote inclusive policies and practices that allow us to confront inequalities and accelerate the necessary actions so that no one is left behind.

From the United Nations Population Fund, we will continue to work with you towards this goal.

Thank you very much.